

Media, Pa – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) applauded the National Park Service and officials from the American Revolution Center (ARC) for reaching an agreement that will allow 78 acres of private land to add to the territory of Valley Forge National Historic Park. The recent decision to place the facility in Philadelphia as part of Independence National Historic Park comes as a compromise to end the more than a decade of discussion and debate about where the ARC would be built.

“I am pleased to know that the Valley Forge National Historical Park will receive 78 acres of historically significant land within the congressionally mandated boundaries of the park,” said Congressman Sestak. “The National Park Service and the Valley Forge National Historical Park can now preserve and protect for future generations of Americans priceless land that just a few years ago was zoned for residential development.”

When informed that the ARC would now be constructed at 3rd and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia, Congressman Sestak was pleased to note how this decision balances the interests of visitors, the needs of the National Parks Service and the value of the land itself to the quality of life in Montgomery County.

“I appreciate the efforts of Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, the National Parks Service and the American Revolution Center for arriving at a solution that protects the park,” said Congressman Sestak. “I had advocated for the American Revolution Center to be located at the Valley Forge National Historic Park Visitors’ Center, but I am very pleased that there is planning underway to use the combined \$1.3 million of FY 2009 appropriation and supplemental funds to upgrade the existing visitors’ center. In the end, the Valley Forge National Historic Park and the City of Philadelphia have set an important example for sustainable land management and environmentally-sound planning. This solution makes optimal use of the land both at Valley Forge National Historic Park and Independence National Historic Park for the benefit of the citizens of Pennsylvania and the nation.”

On April 22, the Department of the Interior announced that the more than \$2 million will be allocated to the Valley Forge National Historic Park from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, also known as the economic stimulus bill, which the Congressman supported. Congressman Sestak also helped secure \$1 million in funds for The Friends of Valley Forge Park’s project to rehabilitate two buildings at the Welcome Center.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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